

ORDNANCE PRODUCTS, INC.
North East, Maryland
(National Priorities List Site)
MD-268

Site Location

The Ordnance Products, Inc. (OPI) site occupies 94.6 acres in Cecil County, Maryland. The site is located at 1079 Mechanics Valley Road, approximately 3 miles north of the town of North East.

Site History

The OPI site was operated as an ordnance components manufacturing plant from 1957 to 1979. The types of components manufactured included grenade fuses, detonators, ignition components and pyrotechnic signals.

Kraus Design, Inc. (KDI) acquired the OPI site in 1969. KDI continued ordnance production until 1979, when operations were moved out-of-state and the OPI site was abandoned. The property remained vacant until 1986, when the property was sold to Mechanics Valley Trade Center, Inc. (MVTC). Mr. Peter Wood was the majority stockholder of MVTC. In January 1990, MVTC was sold, under full environmental disclosure, to Mr. William Fredericks, the current and majority stockholder of the corporation.

Environmental Investigations and Actions

The Maryland Department of the Environment, Waste Management Administration (MDE) collected samples from the site in June 1987. Contamination sources identified in 1987 included burn pits, buried ordnance components, landfills, a waste solvent disposal pit, abandoned bulk chemicals, an abandoned metal plating shop with six waste discharge ponds, contaminated soils and groundwater. Contaminants of concern identified were vinyl chloride, 1,2-dichloroethene (1,2-DCE), trichloroethene (TCE), tetrachloroethene (PCE), toluene, lead, chromium, and arsenic. Contaminants of concern were detected in on-site soils, groundwater, surface water and sediments. Contaminants were also found to have migrated off-site and impacted nearby residential wells downgradient of the facility.

In November 1987, MDE issued a Consent Order to KDI and the MVTC requiring that they install and maintain filters on contaminated residential wells. In June 1988, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a Unilateral Administrative Order (UAO) mandating KDI to pursue the investigation and cleanup of the site. In December 1988, EPA issued a UAO requiring MVTC to prevent unauthorized entry to the site, and to install and maintain an air stripper on the contaminated on-site potable water supply well. By 1991, KDI had installed and was maintaining carbon filtration systems on the five contaminated residential wells. In August 1994, EPA issued a UAO requiring MVTC to join with KDI to pursue the investigation and cleanup of the site.

During the investigation, it was determined that a groundwater extraction and treatment system should be installed to capture contaminated groundwater that was migrating off-site toward Little Northeast Creek. Construction of the on-site groundwater extraction and treatment system was completed in January 1997. However, in February

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1997, KDI verbally informed EPA that KDI could not, due to the financial condition of the company, operate and maintain the system.

In February 1997, EPA assumed responsibility for sampling nearby residential wells on a quarterly basis. EPA also assumed the responsibility of maintaining the carbon/UV light filtration systems on the five contaminated residential wells. In September 1997, EPA initiated a fund-lead Removal Action at the site. This action addressed contaminated surface water and sediments associated with the five on-site impoundments. The water pumped from these impoundments was treated through a sediment filter and carbon filter system. Discharge was to an on-site stream. The contaminated sediments were excavated and disposed of off site. All but one of the impoundments were completely backfilled. A retention basin was constructed out of the other impoundment. The impoundment area has been regraded to pre-impoundment surface contours. This Removal Action was completed in December 1997.

On September 25, 1997, the site was added to the National Priorities List. This site is a fund-lead site because no financially viable Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs) have been identified. The EPA chose Tetra Tech-NUS, Inc. as the remedial contractor. The Remedial Investigation Work Plan was finalized in April 1999. On July 20, 1999, EPA held a public availability session to provide the public the opportunity to learn about the site. Remedial Investigation fieldwork activities were conducted between May 1999 and December 2001.

Current Status

Five nearby residential wells are impacted by site-related contaminants, four of which are above regulatory levels. EPA is maintaining filtration systems on all five of these wells.

In December 2002, Tetra Tech-NUS submitted the draft Remedial Investigation (RI) report for agency review. The Maryland Department of the Environment submitted written comments to EPA regarding this report in February and April 2003. As of December 2004, Tetra Tech-NUS was conducting additional fieldwork to finalize the Remedial Investigation report. A final version of the RI is expected in early 2005.

The EPA continues searching for financially viable PRPs who may be responsible for the cost of the investigation and cleanup of the site.

Facility Contact

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